

## "What The Church Should Be Like," Part 1 - 1 Corinthians 14:21-25 – February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- Today's teaching will be part one of new a series I've titled, "What The Church Should Be Like."
  - I made the decision to turn a corner of sorts in teaching through the rest of this chapter, so as to address the church as a whole.
  - This because, the overall worship service within the church will never be in order, if the church as a whole isn't first put in order.
  - What's becoming quite apparent from our study through Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians is they were in need of correction.
  - To their credit, they were the ones who had written Paul and asked him about the problems within their church in the first place.
  - As such, from chapter seven on through the remainder of the book of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, Paul provides answers to their questions.
  - Though we don't have a record of the letter the Corinthians sent Paul, we can surmise what those questions were from Paul's.
  - It seems that some of the questions they were asking Paul about were related to what the church and service should be like.
  - It's for this reason that I chose this title. I believe this question is as apropos if not more so for us, as it was for them back then.
  - While the culture and times have certainly changed over the last 2,000 years, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
  - Certainly technology has dramatically changed since the times of the early church, but the Word of God has never changed.
  - One has aptly said the methods have changed over the years, but the message remains the same and should never change.
  - The problem was the Corinthian church was being changed by the culture instead of the culture being changed by the church.
  - This explains why Paul is writing very specifically concerning what and how the church and the worship service should be like.
  - I suppose in some way you could say the remainder of the chapter is a lesson in Church 101, or Church for dummies if you will.
  - At the risk of offering what may be seen as an oversimplification, the basic church template if found in Matthew 28 and Acts 2.
  - In Matthew 28, we have the great commission from the Savior Himself to go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.
  - Acts 2 is how, evangelism, water baptism, baptism with the Holy Spirit, the Apostles doctrine fellowship communion and prayer.
  - Please know that this basic church template is the foundation and doesn't suggest that all churches are going to be the same.
  - Every church has it's own unique personality, which is why we have so many different churches, with so many different styles.
  - The truth of the matter is, not everyone is going to like the style of this church, and thankfully there are other churches on Oahu.
- I like how Pastor Damian Kyle said it, "While no one church is right for everyone, every church is right for someone."
- Here's where I'm going with all of this, and don't worry we're getting to our text in a moment; the church needs to be the church.
  - I'm keenly aware this sounds cliché, so let me say; the more the world waxes evil, the more the church needs to be the church.
  - I'll take it a step further and say that like never before in these last days the world needs for the church to be unlike the world.
  - This is where our text today comes into play, such that, the church must keep the main thing the main thing, Jesus the Christ.
  - Sadly, the Corinthian church like many a church today, has gotten off track, and Jesus is no longer the main thing, people are.
  - They had made the church all about them, which is why the church as a whole was not being edified let alone worshipping God.
- ### 1. The Church should be a place where we worship God (Verses 21-25)
- v21-22 Paul quotes Isaiah 28, when Israel had grown indifferent toward God, they heard other tongues as a sign of judgment.
- Of this one commentator wrote, "In Deuteronomy 28, the Lord said, "As My people turn their back on Me and become cold toward Me, they will hear the tongues of other nations when foreigners invade their land." We see the fulfillment of this in Isaiah 28, when, because God's people had grown indifferent toward Him, the Assyrians were allowed to occupy their land. Because of this historical reference, when Paul says tongues are for a sign to them that believe not, it is my strong personal opinion that he is speaking not of unbelievers, but to believers who, like those in Isaiah's day, have grown indifferent or callused toward the Lord. In other words, he's speaking to those who don't believe in the present power of the Holy Spirit.
- v23 Paul then goes on to say that if unbelievers hear the whole church speaking tongues, they'll think you are out of your mind.
- v24 He says conversely, if they here everyone prophesying they'll be convicted of sin because they're brought under judgment.
- v25 He says their hearts will be laid bare, and that they will fall down and worship God exclaiming, "God is really among you."
- What Paul is saying here is nothing should be a distraction from the purpose of the church, which is to glorify and worship God.
  - Namely the gifts of tongues, which as the dominant focus of the Corinthian church became a hindrance to the worship of God.
  - Then there was the matter of an unbeliever who went to that church. The environment they created was not conducive to either.
  - If you were to ask me what I as the pastor of this amazing church saw as my chief aim for this church, this would have to be it.
  - More specifically, that of creating an environment that is conducive to unbelievers knowing God and believers worshipping God.
  - Lest you think it's my strategy, let me hasten to say it's God's vis-à-vis the aforementioned template in Matthew 28 and Acts 2.
  - I never want this church to be about anything or anyone other than the person of Jesus Christ Who is the way, truth and the life.
  - I would submit this is the only way to do church; it's the only way to have a true church, and it's the only way for life in a church.
  - I'd like to close with the letter from Jesus to such a church; the church of Philadelphia, which was one of the seven churches.
- Rev 3:7-8 "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.